

1950

Under a Cedar Tree at Piney Woods

J. Oliver Emmerich

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ise of new horizons in the future, there was a moment of pensiveness. Said Dr. Jones, "If I had to live my life over again, I would choose to do just what I have done" . . . And it was done well because he worked as if it all depended upon him and he prayed as if it all depended upon God. He didn't let God down and God held high his hands of service.

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A slab of marble should be placed on the Piney Woods campus and this should be inscribed upon it: "Some men so live that they lift their age so that all men walk on higher ground." Above the inscription should be chisled "Laurence Clifton Jones."

—o—

The author of this article is one of the first and most useful citizens of Mississippi—Mr. J. O. Emmerich—Editor—Publisher and Lecturer.

He is a member of the State Board of Education, the Economic Council and in the forefront of all good movements for a better Mississippi.

FORM OF BEQUEST

Our friends are requested to give the school some aid in the way of testamentary bequests. Its corporate name is The Piney Woods Country Life School; and Piney Woods, Mississippi should be added in specification of the place.

By resolution of the Board of Trustees, all money received toward the Endowment will be forwarded to the well-known Commercial Bank and Trust Co., of Jackson, Miss.; and it will be asked for recommendations as to the investment of surplus funds.

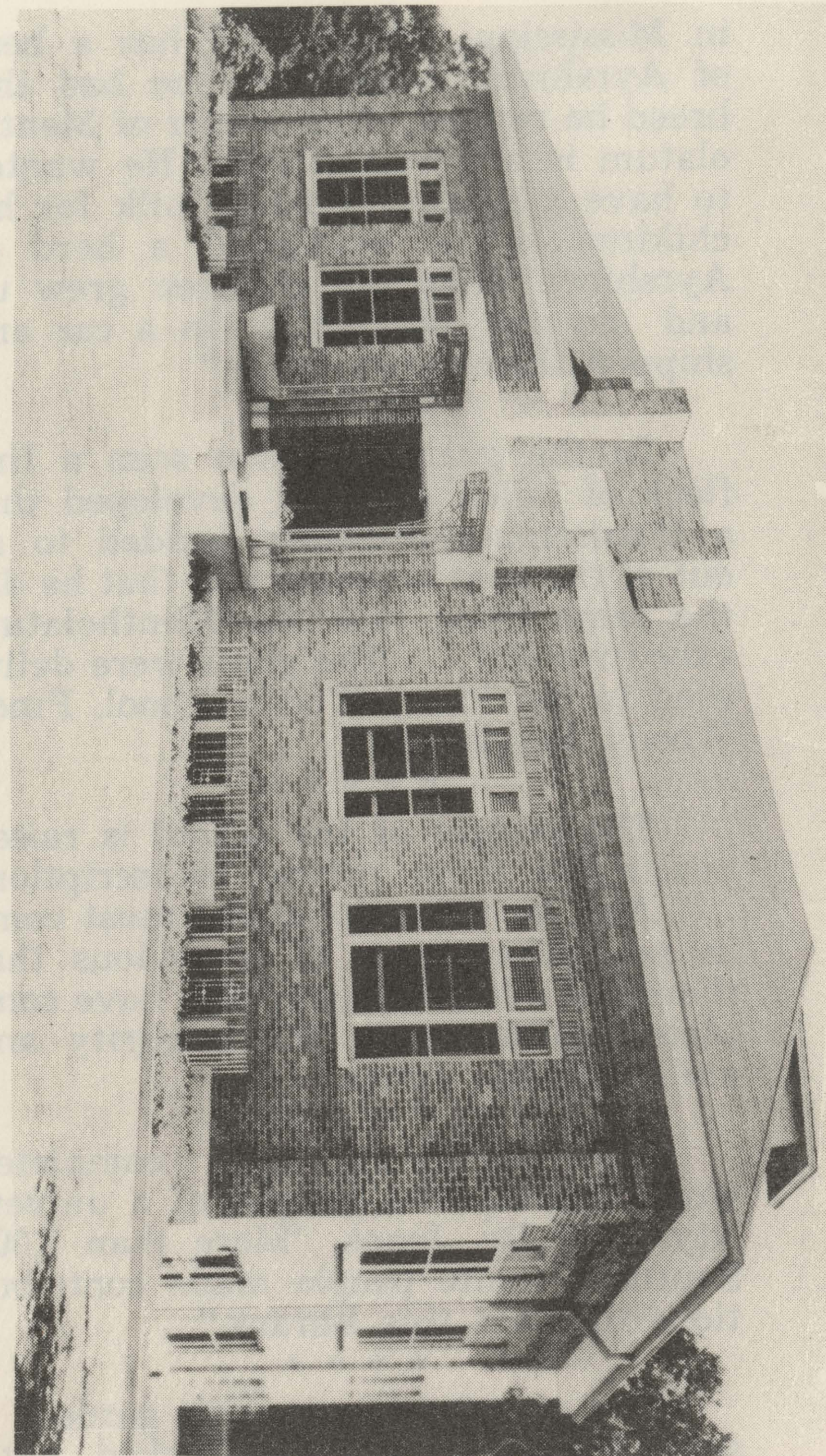
By availing ourselves of the experience of an institution which has long been familiar with investment business, we believe that we shall be able to invest any money belonging to the Endowment Fund, having in mind a maximum return with the proper degree of safety.

OUR GREATEST NEED

1950-51 is our 40th Anniversary.

We'd like to construct a science building (to teach our boys and girls to follow in the footsteps of George Washington Carver). It would have other class rooms and an auditorium and would cost \$85,000.00. Toward this amount we have in the First National Bank, Jackson, Mississippi, \$26,000.00.

LIBRARY
Construction made possible by gifts from Northern and Southern white folks.
More than 2,000 Southern people sent contributions.



Piney Woods School

Reprinted From

"High Lights in Headlines,"

Front Page Column of

McComb, (Miss.) Enterprise-Journal

By

J. O. EMMERICH, Editor and Publisher

Under A Cedar Tree At Piney Woods

When a newspaperman experiences something and wishes all the while that he had a typewriter before him so that he could be hammering out his impressions—well, whatever the experience is, it clicks. Thus it was with this writer yesterday when he visited Piney Woods school.

* * * * *

This story starts under a cedar tree over a century old, and near a spring of cool running water in front of an old log cabin which was one of the "goat castles" of an earlier Mississippi. This picturesque spot is now a part of the modern day Piney Woods school, and here as a young Iowa State University graduate (Iowa City) Dr. Laurence Jones drank from this spring and sat under this tree and read . . . and dreamed.

It was in the year 1910 that Dr. Jones, now one of the Nation's foremost Negro educators, was reading under the cedar tree while a Negro lad of 16 sat beside him. Dr. Jones handed him the book and pointed to a certain paragraph. The Negro boy handed the book back with the explanation that he could not read. "Then I will teach you," said the young Dr. Jones.

* * * * *

The next day at the same hour he met that colored boy at the spring under the cedar tree. The second day the boy brought a friend along with him and at the month's end more than 40 Negro youths had signified that they wanted to learn more about reading and writing. This is how Piney Woods School, Piney Woods, Miss., was conceived.

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First Dr. Jones moved the sheep out of the log cabin and used it as his home and as a school house. The demands grew and Dr. Jones grew with them. As was said sometime ago in The Readers Digest, Dr. Jones worked as if the whole job of building the school depended upon him and he prayed as if the whole job depended upon God.

* * * * *

Dr. Jones showed this scribe through his dairy barn, one of the finest

in Mississippi. The school has a herd of Ayrshires. Asked why he had this breed he replied, "The maker of Mentholatum is a friend of ours. He wanted to have a supply of fresh milk for his children so he developed a herd of Ayrshires. Then the children grew up and he put the cattle in a car and shipped them down to us."

* * * * *

In the goat barn was seen a fine flock of milch goats. It developed that a Mississippi herdsman decided to go out of the goat business and that he did the same thing that the Mentholatum executive did . . . The goats were delivered to the Piney Woods school, Piney Woods, Mississippi.

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The budget of the school is raised practically from private subscriptions . . . And, as these donations must come in year after year, it is obvious that there are a lot of people who have complete confidence in the integrity and ability of Dr. Jones.

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The library recently completed would dignify the campus of a university. Said Dr. Jones, "More than 2,000 Southern white people made contributions to build this library."

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The campus has a rock garden, a sunken garden, a lake stocked with

game fish, winding roads amid colorful buildings; and on the campus is heard the hum of buzz saws, the clanking of fly wheels on off-set presses, the voices of instructors teaching colored youths how to repair a motor or make brick for the edifices under construction on the campus.

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But the greatest factor about Piney Woods school is the attitude of the teachers and students. Their manners are pleasing. Their conduct is orderly. The personality of the campus bespeaks discipline without dictatorship, and respect for authority . . . And while visiting the classes, this writer observed that the youths were learning something to make them more skilled in the crafts of the commonwealth.

* * * * *

A state with skilled individuals is richer than a state with unskilled workmen. Dr. Jones is making his contribution to his race through the skill by which he is passing on ideals that are being planted in the hearts and minds of students.

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It was this editor's good fortune to address the student body. A message was centered about the thought recently taken from Charles Lindbergh's

new book, "Of Flight and Life." Said the author, "We cannot escape the fact that our civilization has been built, and still depends, upon the quality rather than the equality of men." The upward search for equality of opportunity is not to be shunned but the fact remains that, when men place the emphasis upon the problems of humanity, the problems of equality vanish . . . And Dr. Jones and his faculty are seeking to build a race of quality men and women.

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After the classes had been visited and the students were seen eating a well-planned meal in the dining hall; after the farm had been visited and the speech had been delivered, and the sun commenced to lower itself in the west; Dr. Jones went back with this writer to the shade of that cedar tree within the sound of that babbling brook near the old log cabin where once the goats romped and played. Under that tree now is the grave of the school president's mate who helped him through the early years . . . It is hallowed ground.

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With this note of pathos springing out of the past and the achievements of the present all about, and the prom-